

Message Text

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 BOGOTA 2951

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SUBJECT: COUNTRY PLAN: BILATERAL COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIP

REF: A. USIA 7961; B. BOGOTA 2321

USIS BOGOTA RESUBMITS HERewith ITS ESSAY ON BILATERAL COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIP AS PER REQUEST IN REFTEL A.
1. COLOMBIA PROVIDES A GOOD ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH TO CARRY ON THE INTERCHANGE OF IDEAS. THERE EXISTS A LARGE BODY OF COLOMBIAN LEADERS WHO STUDIES AND LIVED IN THE UNITED STATES GARNERING PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION FOR OUR COUNTRY. U.S. INSTITUTIONS ARE RESPECTED BY COLOMBIANS AND PROVIDE A POINT OF REFERENCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COLOMBIAN INSTITUTIONS. INDICATIVE OF THIS RESPECT IS THE FLOURISHING NETWORK OF COLOMBIAN-U.S. BINATIONAL CENTERS WHOSE SUCCESS IN THIS COUNTRY CAN BE ATTRIBUTED IN PART TO COLOMBIANS' APPRECIATION FOR CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE IDENTIFIED WITH THE UNITED STATES. "DESPITE THE BASIC STRENGTHS IN OUR RELATIONSHIP, COLOMBIA IS A THIRD WORLD COUNTRY SUBJECT TO THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TENSIONS WHICH CHARACTERIZE UNDERDEVELOPED NATIONS. THUS IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT COLOMBIA IS CAPABLE OF ASSUMING ADVERSARY POSITIONS ON MATTERS OF CONCERN TO THE U.S., EVEN WHILE ATTEMPTING TO PRESERVE A STABLE AND PROGRESSIVE
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RELATIONSHIP WITH US. COLOMBIANS FREQUENTLY FIND THEMSELVES IN UNCOMFORTABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S., NOT NECESSARILY OF THEIR OWN CHOOSING, BUT FORCED UPON THEM BY HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, AND THE INEVITABLE IMPACT THAT THE U.S. HAS ON THIS SOCIETY. COLOMBIANS TEND INSTINCTIVELY TO EMULATE "THE AMERICAN WAY" WHILE AT THE SAME TIME INSISTING ON FINDING THEIR OWN SOLUTIONS AND MAINTAINING THEIR IDENTIFY, INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AND RESPECT CONCOMITANT WITH

IT.

"COLOMBIANS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE EXPLOITATION OF THEIR COUNTRY BY FOREIGN INTERESTS. THEY ARE APT TO BELIEVE THAT THE BASIC INTEREST OF THE U.S. AND COLOMBIA ARE NOT IN AGREEMENT BECAUSE OF THE OBVIOUS ECONOMIC DISPARITY BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES. U.S. ECONOMIC INTENTIONS ARE FREQUENTLY QUESTIONED. THE U.S. TRADE ACT IS CONSIDERED UNFAVORABLE TO COLOMBIAN INTERESTS AND THE GENERAL SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES OF LIMITED BENEFIT.

FURTHERMORE, COLOMBIA IS SEEKING TO DIVERSIFY ITS MARKETS AND THERE ARE GROWING DOUBTS REGARDING THE EQUITY OF THE WORLD TRADING SYSTEM AS IT PRESENTLY ORGANIZED. ANOTHER MAJOR AREA OF CONCERN TO COLOMBIA IS NASCENT PROTECTIONISM IN THE U.S. SOME COLOMBIAN PRODUCTS, ARE ALLEGED TO BE UNDERCUTTING THE SALE OF SIMILAR GOODS IN THE U.S. AND PROVOKING DEMANDS FOR TARIFF PROTECTION BY AMERICAN MANUFACTURERS. COLOMBIANS CONSIDER THIS DISRUPTIVE TO THEIR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARE QUITE VOCIFEROUS IN THEIR CRITICISMS OF THE U.S. ON THIS ISSUE.

2. TO COUNTERACT THIS EXISTING MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT U.S. ECONOMIC POLICIES, MAJOR EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO EXPLAIN THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO A FREE, OPEN WORLD TRADING SYSTEM STRESSING THE DANGER INHERENT IN REVERTING TO PROTECTIONISM. EMPHASIS WILL BE GIVEN TO THE ADVANTAGES GAINED FROM INCREASED UTILIZATION OF THE U.S. GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES AND UNCLASSIFIED

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THE BENEFITS OF UTILIZING U.S. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL KNOW-HOW IN FURTHERING COLOMBIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. POST PROGRAMS WILL BE DIRECTED TOWARD GOVERNMENT ECONOMISTS, LEADERS IN INDUSTRY AND ACADEMIA WITH EMPHASIS ON BILATERAL ECONOMICS AND TRADE ISSUES, AND U.S. INVESTMENT IN COLOMBIA.

3. COLOMBIA'S THIRD WORLD VOICE IS MODERATE NOT STRIDENT AND ITS POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL FORA ARE OFTEN SUPPORTIVE OF THE U.S. HOWEVER, IT IS A NATION WHICH IS INCREASINGLY SEEKING TO DEFINE ITS POSITIONS IN TERMS OF ITS OWN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SELF-INTEREST. CERTAIN LONG-TERM ISSUES THEREFORE COULD CREATE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS IF CONFLICT OF INTEREST EMERGE. TO MINIMIZE THIS POSSIBILITY, WE WILL ENCOURAGE A DIALOGUE WITH COLOMBIAN LEADERS ON THE NORTH-SOUTH ISSUE, STRESSING U.S. DESIRE FOR EQUITABLE SOLUTIONS. IN CONCERT WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS, WE WILL ATTEMPT TO GET COLOMBIAN SUPPORT FOR U.S. POSITIONS ON SUCH LONGER-TERM ISSUES AS THE LAW OF THE SEAS, MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS, ARMS RESTRAINT AND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION BY HIGHLIGHTING U.S. DESIRE FOR REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STABILITY AND THE NEED FOR CONTROLS AND RESTRAINTS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE U.S. INTEREST TO RESOLVE SUCH REGIONAL PROBLEMS AS THE PANAMA CANAL, PLUS ASSURING THE

COLOMBIANS THAT THE U.S. IS SUPPORTIVE OF THEIR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND MAINTAINS A SERIOUS INTEREST IN AIDING COLOMBIA TO SOLVE THE NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING PROBLEM WHICH AFFECTS BOTH NATIONS. CONCOMITANTLY, WE WILL PROMOTE THE NEED TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE COMPLEX PROCESS OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND TO IMPROVE THE FREE FLOW INFORMATION IN PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE.

4. WHILE HUNDREDS OF COLOMBIAN PROFESSIONALS HAVE STUDIED IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES UNDER OFFICIAL U.S. AUSPICES, AND THOUSANDS MORE ON THEIR OWN, THEIR ABILITY TO CORRECT MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT AMERICAN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PROCESS IS RATHER LIMITED, ESPECIALLY ON THE UNIVERSITY SCENE. THIS SITUATION IS SUSTAINED BY INADEQUATE ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT AND EXTREMELY UNCLASSIFIED

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VOCAL, THOUGH RELATIVELY SMALL, GROUPS OF ANTI-AMERICANS LEFTIST STUDENTS WHO HAVE POLITICIZED THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES, PROMOTING TURMOIL AND EXTENDED SHUTDOWNS. COLOMBIAN STUDENTS GIVE TOP PRIORITY TO

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PROFESSIONAL STUDIES WHICH LEAD TO WELL PAYING JOBS RATHER THAN THE ARTS, HUMANITIES OR SOCIAL SCIENCES. CONSEQUENTLY IT HAS BEEN IMPOSSIBLE TO LAUNCH PROGRAMS IN AMERICAN STUDIES. HOWEVER, THE FULBRIGHT COMMISSION AND THE POST RECENTLY DISCUSSED THE FEASIBILITY OF INITIATING PROGRAMS IN AMERICAN STUDIES AND A LONG-RANGE PROJECT WAS DRAWN UP INVOLVING SELECTED MEMBERS OF ACADEMIA WHO ARE INTERESTED

IN DEVELOPING AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAMS.

5. WE WILL USE THE LASPAU PROGRAM, VISITING AMERICAN PROFESSORS AND PERSONAL CONTACTS TO STRENGTHEN UNIVERSITY LINKAGES IN ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER AREAS APPROPRIATE TO MISSION OBJECTIVES.

6. LECTURES AND SEMINARS ON TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, JUDICIAL PROCESSES, HUMAN RIGHTS, MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS ORGANIZED IN COOPERATION WITH APPROPRIATE MINISTRIES, UNIVERSITIES AND INSTITUTIONS WILL BE PROGRAMMED TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE FOR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING. POST'S SUPPORT EFFORTS TO MISSION GOALS WILL BE BOLSTERED THROUGH IV GRANTS TO KEY COLOMBIAN TRADE, FUNANCE, JUDICIARY OFFICIALS AND TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. PROGRAMMING FORMER GRANTEES THROUGHOUT THE POST'S BINATIONAL CENTER NETWORK WILL PROVIDE ADDED DEIMENSIONS TO PROGRAMMING POSSIBILITIES. SINCE THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR PLAY A ROLE IN THE FORMULATION OF ECONOMIC POLICY IN COLOMBIA, SPECIAL ATTENTION
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WILL BE GIVEN TO EDITORIAL BOARDS, ECONOMIC WRITERS AND VARIOUS GOVERNMENT BODIES SUCH AS THE COLOMBIAN INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN COMMERCE (INCOMEX), THE FUND FOR THE PROMOTION OF EXPORTS (PROEXPO) AND SUCH PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS AS THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS (ANDI) AND THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (ANIF) FOR PARTICIPATION IN A WIDE RANGE OF POST'S PROGRAMS AND EXCHANGES.

7. THE POST WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE MISSION POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SECTIONS TO INVOLVE SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN APPROPRIATE PROGRAMS SUPPORTING MISSION OBJECTIVES. EDITORIAL WRITERS AND COLUMNISTS FROM BOGOTA'S IMPORTANT NEWSPAPERS WILL BE SLATED FOR PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL SEMINARS, AS RECIPIENTS OF IMPORTANT POLICY DOCUMENTS AND RECEIVE FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE TO ENCOURAGE REPORTING ON ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTERESTS". UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, MILITARY OFFICERS (PARTICULARLY THOSE IN THE NATIONAL DEFENSE COLLEGE) AND SEVERAL COMMITTEES IN THE COLOMBIAN CONGRESS WILL ALSO BE INCLUDED IN THE POST'S PRIORITY GROUPS FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION. COLOMBIANS, HOWEVER, WOULD LIKE TO SEE A GREATER INTEREST IN AND UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THE U.S. MEDIA. THEY CRITICIZE THE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF THE AMERICAN PRESS TOWARD THEIR COUNTRY, ITS RELUCTANCE TO WRITE ABOUT COLOMBIAN-U.S. FRIENDSHIP AND THE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH THIS COUNTRY IS FOUNDED. CREATING INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES THROUGH EXCHANGES, PROVIDING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN SPECIALISTS TO VISIT COLOMBIA FOR LONGER PERIODS

THAN A FEW DAYS, FACILITATING THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION
AND IDEAS THROUGH PUBLICATIONS AND TELEVISION MATERIAL
WOULD SPEED UP THE AMERICAN LEARNING PROCESS ABOUT COLOMBIA.
COLOMBIANS VALUE THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND TECHNOLOGY,
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AND RECOGNIZE THE BENEFITS OF SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL AND
EDUCATIONAL TIES, ESPECIALLY WITH THE UNITED STATES.
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